AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

The following listing of claims replaces all prior listings, and all prior versions, of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Original) A process for producing 5-iodo-2-methylbenzoic acid through iodination of 2-methylbenzoic acid, characterized in that the process comprises, as essential steps, a reaction step of iodinating 2-methylbenzoic acid in the presence of a microporous compound, iodine, an oxidizing agent, and acetic anhydride, and a purification step including sublimation, distillation, crystallization, or a combination of two or more of these.

2. (Original) A process for producing 5-iodo-2-methylbenzoic acid as described in claim 1, wherein the microporous compound is a β-form zeolite.

3. (Original) A process for producing 5-iodo-2-methylbenzoic acid as described in claim 2, wherein the β-form zeolite has an Si/Al mole ratio of 10 to 250.

4. (Original) A process for producing 5-iodo-2-methylbenzoic acid as described in claim 3, wherein the β-form zeolite contains an element other than Si, Al, and O, which form a skeleton thereof, within or outside the skeleton.

5. (Original) A process for producing 5-iodo-2-methylbenzoic acid as described in claim 4, wherein the element other than Si, Al, and O, which form a

skeleton of the β-form zeolite, is at least one member selected from among Na, K, Cs, Ca, Mg, Ti, Sn, Fe, Ni, Zn, Pb, and Ag.

6. (Original) A process for producing 5-iodo-2-methylbenzoic acid as described in claim 1, wherein the oxidizing agent is iodic acid and/or periodic acid.

7. (Original) A process for producing 5-iodo-2-methylbenzoic acid as described in claim 1, wherein the microporous compound is separated and recovered from a reaction mixture resulting from the reaction step, followed by re-employment in the reaction step.

8. (Original) A process for producing 5-iodo-2-methylbenzoic acid as described in claim 7, wherein the separated and recovered microporous compound is calcined, followed by re-employment in the reaction step.

9. (Original) A process for producing 5-iodo-2-methylbenzoic acid as described in claim 8, wherein the separated and recovered microporous compound is washed with a solvent, followed by calcining.

10. (Original) A process for producing 5-iodo-2-methylbenzoic acid as described in claim 9, wherein the separated and recovered microporous compound is washed with acetic acid serving as the solvent.

11. (Currently amended) A process for producing 5-iodo-2-methylbenzoic acid as described in claim ~~8 or 9~~, wherein the separated and recovered microporous compound is calcined at 400 to 700°C.

12. (Original) A process for producing 5-iodo-2-methylbenzoic acid as described in claim 1, wherein the reaction step is performed in acetic acid serving as a solvent.

13. (Original) A process for producing 5-iodo-2-methylbenzoic acid as described in claim 1, wherein the purification step is crystallization in which a product is precipitated through cooling or addition of water.

14. (Original) A process for producing 5-iodo-2-methylbenzoic acid as described in claim 13, wherein the product is precipitated by adding 0.1 to 5 parts by weight of water to 1 part by weight of formed reaction mixture.

15. (Currently amended) A process for producing 5-iodo-2-methylbenzoic acid as described in claim 13 ~~or 14~~, wherein the formed reaction mixture is subjected to crystallization at 10 to 80°C for purification.

16. (Original) A process for producing 5-iodo-2-methylbenzoic acid as described in claim 13, wherein, after crystallization, the solvent is removed from a

mother liquor, and a portion of the residue obtained after removal of the solvent is recycled in a crystallization system.

17. (Currently amended) High-purity 5-iodo-2-methylbenzoic acid produced through a process as recited in claim 1~~any of claims 1 to 16~~, which has a 5-iodo-2-methylbenzoic acid purity of 99% or higher and which contains iodine, an iodine compound, an inorganic salt, a transition metal compound, a microporous compound, and a metal oxide in a total amount of 500 ppm or less as impurities.

18. (New) A process for producing 5-iodo-2-methylbenzoic acid as described in claim 9, wherein the separated and recovered microporous compound is calcined at 400 to 700°C.

19. (New) A process for producing 5-iodo-2-methylbenzoic acid as described in claim 14, wherein the formed reaction mixture is subjected to crystallization at 10 to 80°C for purification.

20. (New) High-purity 5-iodo-2-methylbenzoic acid produced through a process as recited in claim 7, which has a 5-iodo-2-methylbenzoic acid purity of 99% or higher and which contains iodine, an iodine compound, an inorganic salt, a transition metal compound, a microporous compound, and a metal oxide in a total amount of 500 ppm or less as impurities.